



Colonial
Holidays
by
Walter
Tittle

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Colonial Holidays



COLONIAL HOLIDAYS

Being a Collection of
Contemporary Accounts
of HOLIDAY Celebra-
tions in *Colonial Times*
Compiled, Illustrated
and Illuminated by
Walter Tittle

New



York

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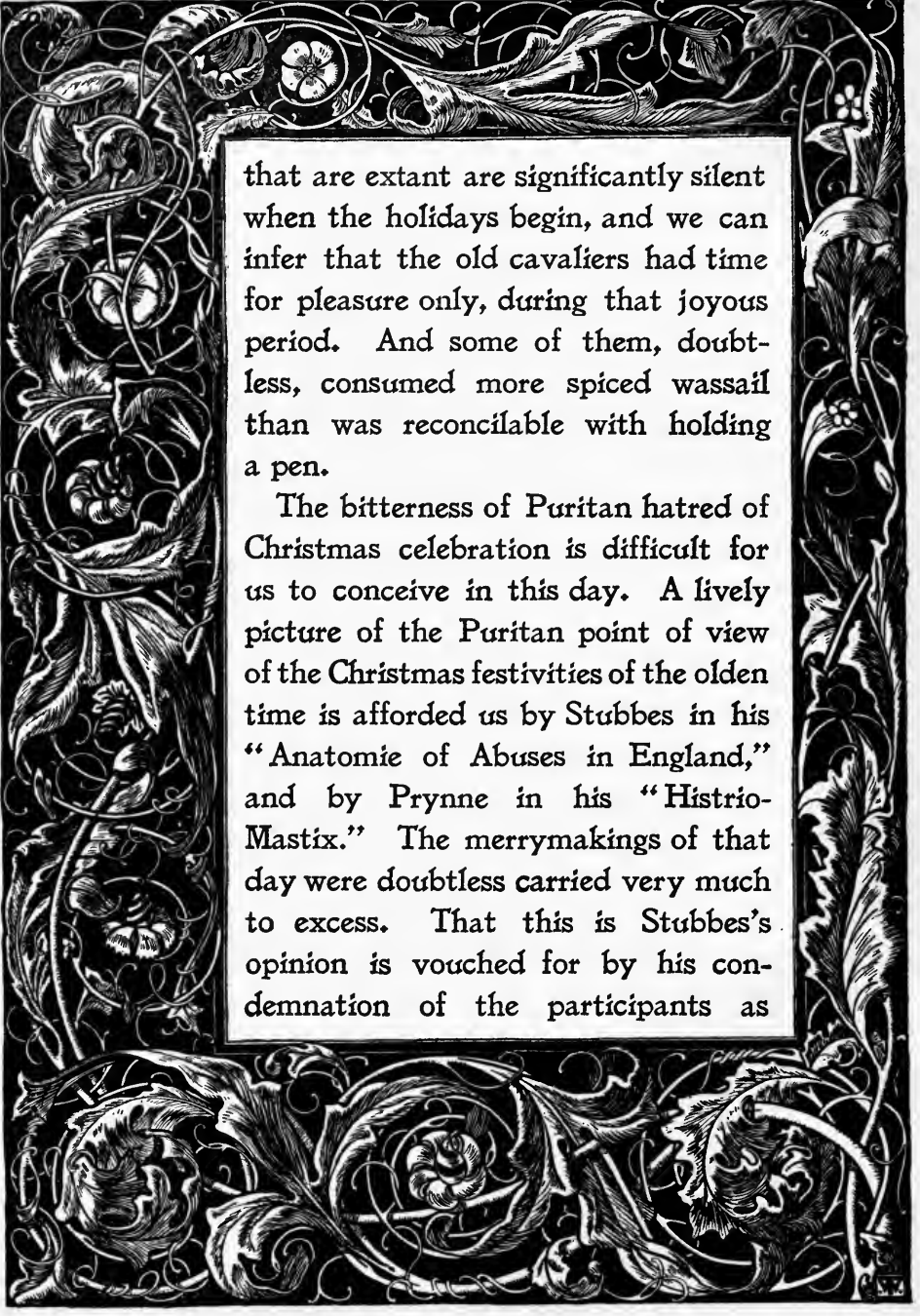
To My Mother



PREFACE

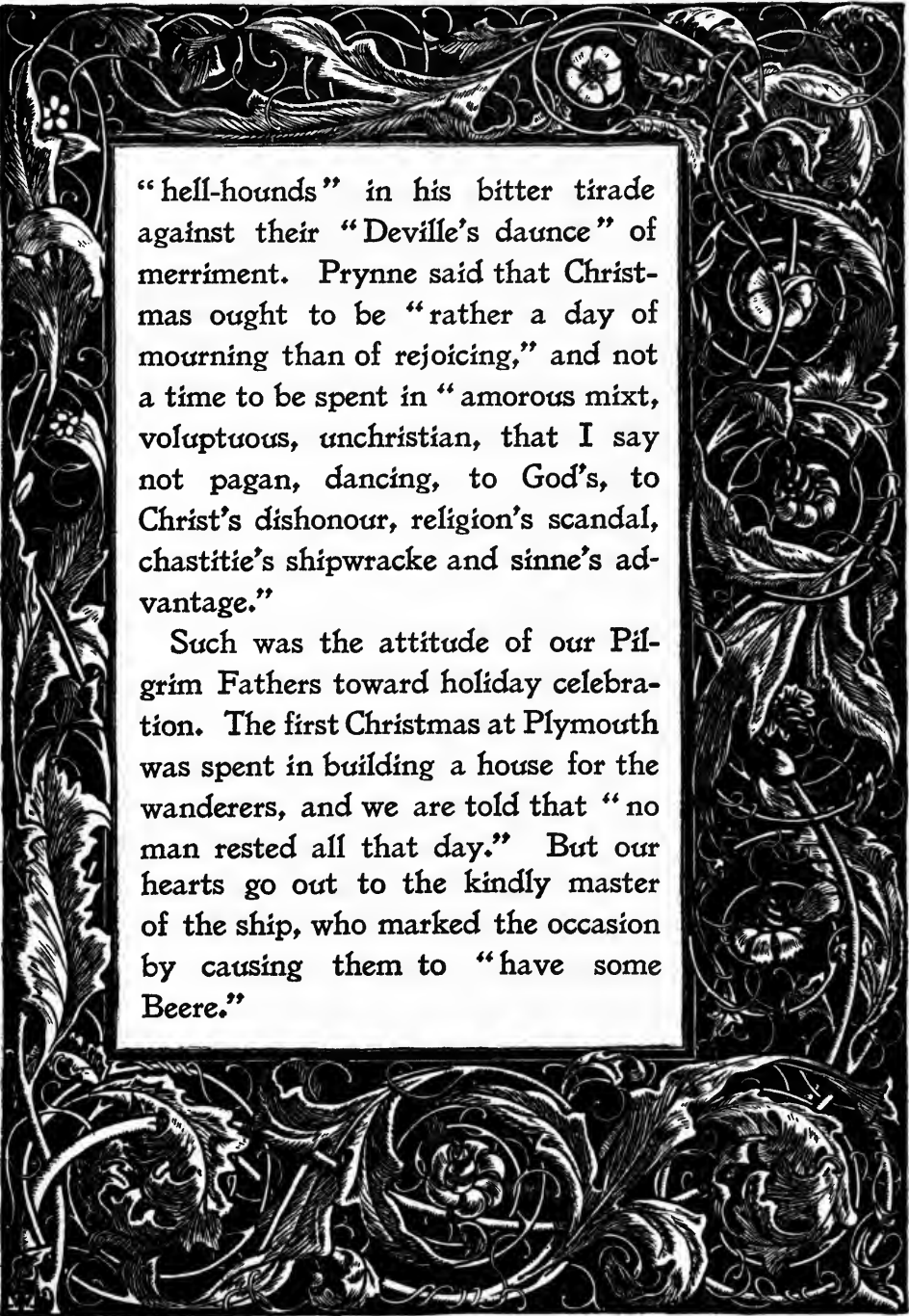
It is greatly to be deplored that our forefathers did not foresee our desire to know how their Christmases were spent. Interesting would be the tales they could have told had they not been too busy with their festivities to think of recording them. But we must content ourselves with a few old diaries and meagre letters treasured in libraries and historical societies, or owned privately by the writer's descendants.

The New England material consists very largely of Puritan protests against celebrations, which sometimes afford us tantalizing hints of the nature of the occasions. Virginia and the South are particularly bald of accounts. The few diaries from these sections

An intricate, black and white decorative border surrounds the text. It features a dense arrangement of stylized flowers, including roses and pansies, intertwined with swirling vines and leaves. The design is symmetrical and highly detailed, typical of late 19th-century book ornamentation.

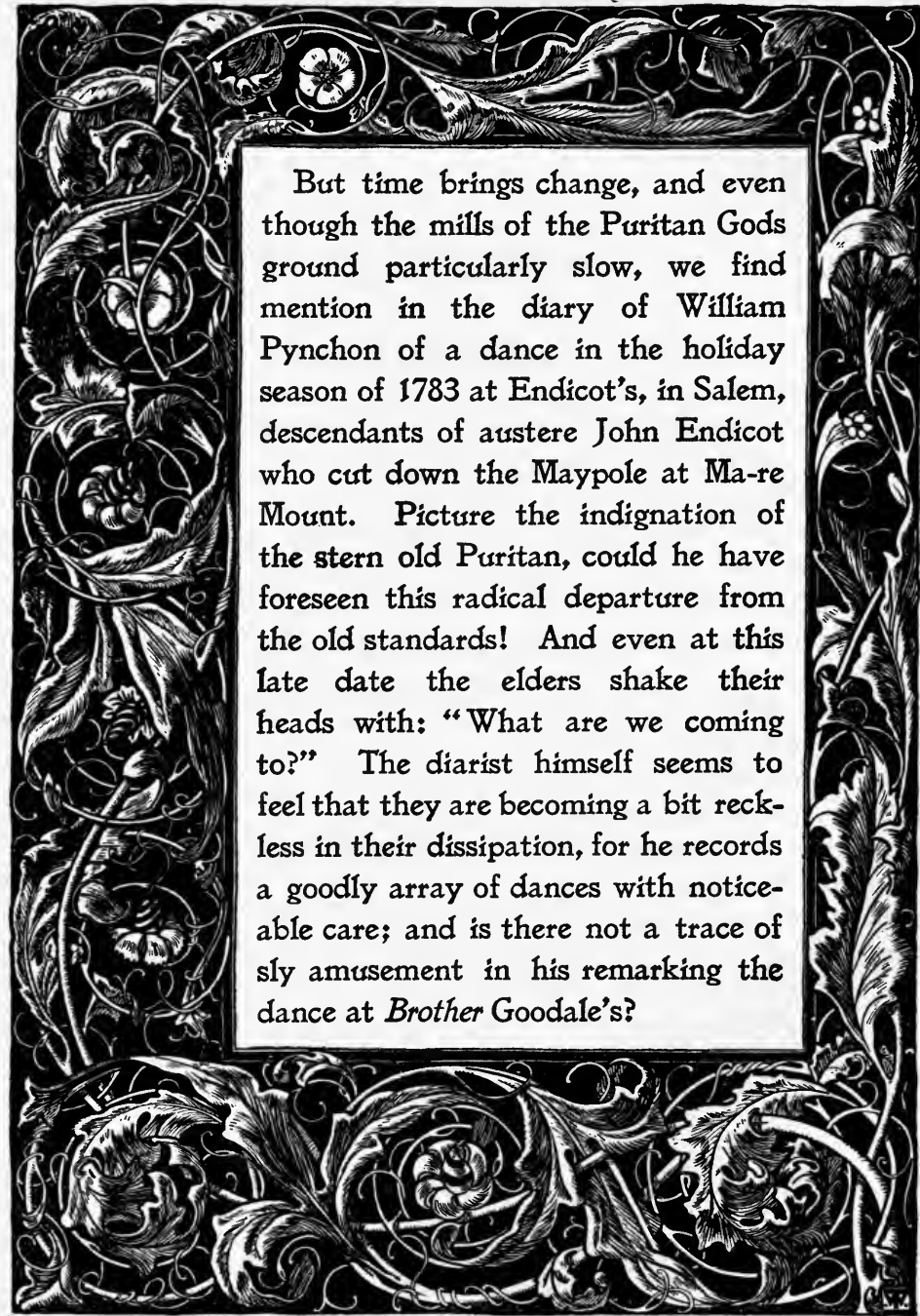
that are extant are significantly silent when the holidays begin, and we can infer that the old cavaliers had time for pleasure only, during that joyous period. And some of them, doubtless, consumed more spiced wassail than was reconcilable with holding a pen.

The bitterness of Puritan hatred of Christmas celebration is difficult for us to conceive in this day. A lively picture of the Puritan point of view of the Christmas festivities of the olden time is afforded us by Stubbes in his "Anatomie of Abuses in England," and by Prynne in his "Histrio-Mastix." The merrymakings of that day were doubtless carried very much to excess. That this is Stubbes's opinion is vouched for by his condemnation of the participants as



“hell-hounds” in his bitter tirade against their “Deville’s daunce” of merriment. Prynne said that Christmas ought to be “rather a day of mourning than of rejoicing,” and not a time to be spent in “amorous mixt, voluptuous, unchristian, that I say not pagan, dancing, to God’s, to Christ’s dishonour, religion’s scandal, chastitie’s shipwracke and sinne’s advantage.”

Such was the attitude of our Pilgrim Fathers toward holiday celebration. The first Christmas at Plymouth was spent in building a house for the wanderers, and we are told that “no man rested all that day.” But our hearts go out to the kindly master of the ship, who marked the occasion by causing them to “have some Beere.”

The text is enclosed in a rectangular frame, which is itself surrounded by a wide, intricate border of black and white illustrations. This border features a dense, symmetrical arrangement of stylized flowers, leaves, and scrolling vines, reminiscent of the Arts and Crafts movement or a similar decorative style. The central text is a single paragraph.

But time brings change, and even though the mills of the Puritan Gods ground particularly slow, we find mention in the diary of William Pynchon of a dance in the holiday season of 1783 at Endicot's, in Salem, descendants of austere John Endicot who cut down the Maypole at Ma-re Mount. Picture the indignation of the stern old Puritan, could he have foreseen this radical departure from the old standards! And even at this late date the elders shake their heads with: "What are we coming to?" The diarist himself seems to feel that they are becoming a bit reckless in their dissipation, for he records a goodly array of dances with noticeable care; and is there not a trace of sly amusement in his remarking the dance at *Brother Goodale's*?

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A Christmas dinner at Mount Vernon
Washington gives his favorite toast
To all our friends ~ ~ ~

Christmas with Washington at Mount
Vernon, being parts of two old letters
Philadelphia, Dec. 1795



& Feb. 1799. We reached Mount Vernon the evening before Christmas, and if anything could have added to our enjoyment it was the arrival of General & Mrs. Mifflin the next day, while we were dining. To be in

the company of so many esteemed friends, & to hear our good General Washington converse upon political subjects without reserve was truly a feast to me.

In the middle of the table was placed a piece of table furniture about six feet long and two feet wide, rounded at the ends. It was either of wood gilded, or polished metal, raised about an inch with a silver rim round it like that round a tea board; in the centre was a pedestal of plaster of Paris with images upon it, & on each end figures, male & female, of the same. It was very elegant and used for ornament only. The dishes were placed all around, and there was an elegant variety of roast beef, veal, turkey, ducks, fowls, hams &c.; puddings, jellies, oranges, apples, nuts, almonds, figs, raisins, & a variety of wines & punch.

We took our leave at six, more than an hour after the candles were introduced.

There were about twenty guests in all.

We were waited on by four or five men servants dressed in livery. Mrs. Mifflin & Josephus Rodbury

Colonial Holidays

The First Christmas Days at Plymouth

Plymouth, 1620

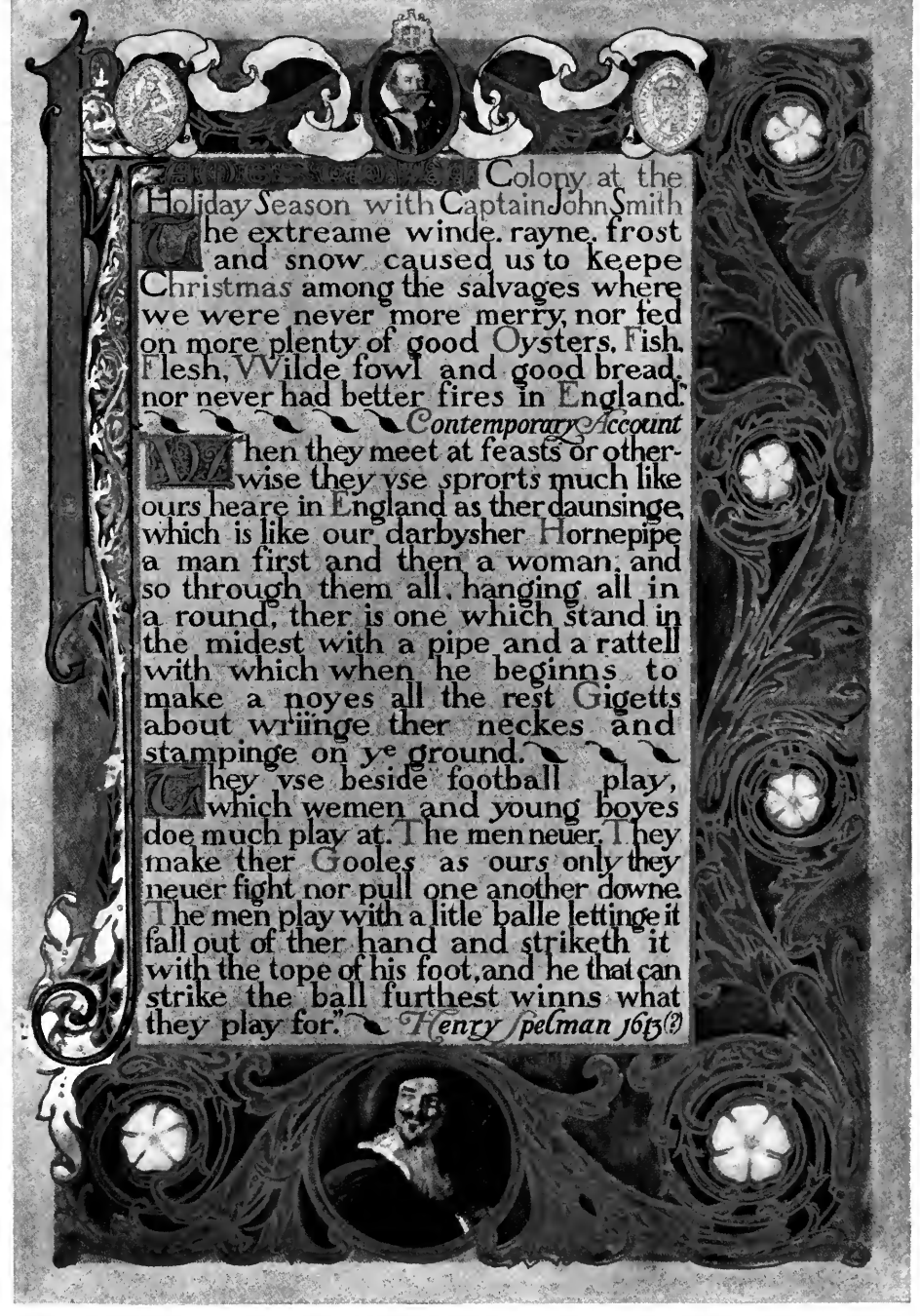
“The 25th day began to erect the first house for common use to receive them and their goods”.—*Gov. Bradford*. “Munday, the 25th day, we went on shore, some to fell tymber, some to saw, some to rive, and some to carry; so no man rested all that day. * * * Munday the 25th being Christmas day, we began to drinke water aboard, but at night the master caused vs to have some Beere”.—*Mourt*.

Plymouth, 1621

I shall remember one passage more, rather of mirth than of waight. One the day called Chrismasday, the Gov^r caled them out to worke, (as was used,) but the most of this new-company excused them selves and said it wente against their consciences to work on that day. So the Gov^r tould them that if they made it a mater of conscience, he would spare them till they were better informed. So he led-away the rest and left them; but when they came home at noone from their worke, he found them in the streete at play, openly; some pitching the barr and some at stoole-ball, and shuch like sports. So he went to them, and tooke away their implements, and tould them that was against his conscience, that they should play and others worke. If they made the keeping of it mater of devotion, let them kepe their houses, but ther should be no gameing or revelling in the streets. Since which time nothing hath been attempted that way, at least openly. *Gov. Bradford.*

**An Early Account of a Virginia Christmas with an Expedition
of Capt. John Smith**

“The extreame winde, rayne, frost and snow caused us to keepe Christmas among the salvages where we were never more merry, nor fed on more plenty of good Oysters, Fish, Flesh, Wilde fowl and good bread, nor never had better fires in England.



Colony at the
Holiday Season with Captain John Smith
The extreame winde. rayne. frost
and snow caused us to keepe
Christmas among the salvages where
we were never more merry, nor fed
on more plenty of good Oysters. Fish.
Flesh, VVilde fowl and good bread,
nor never had better fires in England.

Contemporary Account
When they meet at feasts or other-
wise they vse sports much like
ours heare in England as ther daunsinge,
which is like our darbysher Hornepipe
a man first and then a woman, and
so through them all, hanging all in
a round, ther is one which stand in
the midst with a pipe and a rattell
with which when he beginns to
make a noyes all the rest Gigefts
about wriinge ther neckes and
stampinge on ye ground.

They vse beside football play,
which women and young boyes
doe much play at. The men neuer. They
make ther Gooles as ours only they
neuer fight nor pull one another downe.
The men play with a litle balle lettinge it
fall out of ther hand and striketh it
with the tope of his foot, and he that can
strike the ball furthest winns what
they play for." *Henry Spelman 1613?*

Pastimes in Virginia in 1609-10

When they meet at feats or otherwise they vse sprots much like ours heare in England as ther daunsinge, which is like our darbysher Hornepipe a man first and then a woman, and so through them all, hanging all in a round, ther is one which stand in the midst with a pipe and a rattell with which when he beginns to make a noyes all the rest Gigaretts about wriinge ther neckes and stampinge on ye ground.

They vse beside football play, which wemen and young boyes doe much play at. The men neuer. They make ther Gooles as ours only they neuer fight nor pull one another downe. The men play with a little balle lettinge it fall out of ther hand and striketh it with the tope of his foot, and he that can strike the ball furthest winns what they play for.

Henry Spelman, 1613. (?)

Old New Amsterdam Records

“Dec. 14, 1654. As the winter and the holidays are at hand, there shall be no more ordinary meetings of this board (the city corporation) between this date and three weeks after Christmas. The court messenger is ordered not to summon any one in the meantime.”



A Colonial Belle

Walter Tittle -

Christmas in Boston, 1685, 1697, and 1722

(From the Diary of Samuel Sewall)

Boston

Dec. 25, 1685. Carts come to town and shops open as usual. Some somehow observe the day, but are vexed. I believe that the Body of people profane it, and blessed be God no authority yet to compel them to keep it.

Dec. 28—Cous. Fissenden here, Saith he came for Skins last Friday, and was less Christmas-keeping than last year, fewer Shops Shut up.

Seventh-day, Decembr 25—1697. Snowy day: Shops are open and sleds come to Town with Wood and Fagots as formerly, save what abatement may be allowed on account of the wether. This morning we read in course the 14, 15, and 16th Psalms. From the 4th V. of the 16th Ps—I took occasion to dehort mine from Christmas-keeping, and charged them to forbear. * * Joseph tells me that though most of the Boys went to the Church yet he went not.

Decr 19—1722—His Excellency took me aside to Southeast Window of the Council Chamber, to speak to me about adjourning the Gen^l Court to Monday next because of Christmas. I told his Excellency I would consider of it.

Decr 20—I invited Dr. Mather to Dine with me, not knowing that he preach'd. After Diner I consulted with him about the Adjournment of the Court. We agreed, that 'twould be expedient to take a vote of the Council and Representatives for it.

Friday, Decr 21. P.M. The Govr took me to the window again looking Eastward, next Mrs. Phillips's and spake to me again about

adjourning the Court next Wednesday. I spake against it; and propounded that the Gov^r would take a Vote for it; that he would hold the Balance even between the Church and us. His Excellency went to the Board again, and said much for this adjourning; All kept Christmas but we; I suggested K. James the First to Mr. Dudley, how he boasted what a pure church he had; and they did not keep Yule nor Pasch. Mr. Dudley ask'd if the Scots kept Christmas. His Excellency protested he believ'd they did not. Gov^r said they adjourned for the Commencement and Artillery. But then tis by Agreement. Col. Taylor spake so loud and boisterously for Adjourning, that 'twas hard for any to put in a word; Col. Townsend seconded me, and Col. Partridge; because this would prolong the Sessions. Mr. Davenport stood up and gave it as his opinion, that 'twould not be Convenient for the Gov^r to be present in Court that day; and therefore was for Adjourning. But the Gov^r is often absent; and yet the Council and Representatives go on. Now the Gov^r has told us, that he would go away for a week; and then return'd, and if he liked what we had done, He would Consent to it. Gov^r mentioned how it would appear to have Votes passed on Dec^r 25. But his Excellency need not have been present nor sign'd any Bill that day. I said the Dissenters came a great way for their Liberties and now the Church had theirs, yet they could not be contented, except they might tread all others down. Gov^r said he was of the Church of England. I told Mr. Belcher of his Letter to me. He answer'd, He thought he had been a Dissenter then. Gov^r hinted that he must be free on Monday because of the Communion the next day.

Satterday Dec^r 22—about a quarter of an hour before 12. the Gov^r adjourn'd the Court to Wednesday morn 10. a-clock, and sent Mr. Secretary into the House of Deputies to do it there.

Holiday Time in New York. 1745 & 1747.

Came to New York where I spent the winter; lodged at Mrs. Vangelder's; spent chief of my time at Mr. Alexander's in the day, law and business at night; at Morrisania with J. Depeyster; in

December my Grandmother dyed; in y^e holidays the cocks fought; young assembly in Broadway; many entertainments by the parents of the young ladies. I think same the winter before. Mrs. Baker M^cIntosh. C. Breton officers. Harrison; Twelfth Cakes some time the beginning of the winter (1745)

Much frolicking this winter; at first not acquainted with any of the officers; David Johnston intimate; introduced to 'em; got intimate with Rob and Tyr.

Cards; diversions; more time spent with Ladies; few frolicks at their homes; our jaunt to Morrisania in a sloop; dined at J. Bass's with Ladies.

young Assembly.

asked also to the

Old Asba

Parker.

(1747)





Twelfth - Cake

Tues. Dec^r 25. I chose to stay at home and not go to the Roxbury Lecture. Visited my old friend and Carpenter, Peter Weare, and found him gon to h—(eaven!). The Shops were open, and Carts came to Town with Wood, Hoop-poles, Hay &c. as at other Times: Being a pleasant day, the street was filled with Carts and Horses.

Holiday Time in New York, 1745 and 1747

“Came to New York where I spent the winter; lodged at Mrs Vangelder’s; spent chief of my time at Mr. Alexander’s in the day; law and business at night; continued as we had done the winter before at mathematics with his son. At Morrisania with J. Depeyster; in December my Grandmother dyed; in ye holidays the cock’s fought. Young assembly in Broadway; many entertainments by the parents of the young ladies, I think same the winter before. Mrs Baker McIntosh, C. Breton officers, Harrison; Twelfth Cakes some time the beginning of the winter. (1745)

Much frolicking this winter; at first not acquainted with any of the officers; David Johnston intimate; introduced to ’em; got intimate with Rob and Tyr * * Cards; diversions; more time spent with Ladies; few frolicks at their homes; * * frolick at Mrs Johnstons; * * our jaunt to Morrisania in a sly; dined at J. Bass’s with Ladies; young Assembly; asked also to the Old” (1747)

Diary of Elísha Parker.

Thanksgiving the Puritan Substitute for Christmas

Boston Novemb^r 1st 1750. This Being a General Thanksgiving day, was Strictly Observed heere and more so by the Presbyterians, its Call^d their Christmas, and is the Greatest Holyday they have in the Year and is Observed more Strict than Sunday. Went to Meeting with Capt. Wendell and Family and where Dynd with a Large Comp^y Gentⁿ and Ladies and where very Merry had a Good deal Chat and Spent the Evening at Mr. Jacob Wendells with a Large Company Sup'd Drank a Number Bumpers and Sung Our Songs &c till morn'g.

Journal of Capt. Francis Goelet.

The Christmas Holidays of a Puritan Girl

(Being extracts from the diary of Anna Green Winslow)

Boston, Dec. 14th, 1771.

The weather and walking have been very winter like since the above hotch-potch, pothooks & trammels. I went to Mrs. Whitwells last wednesday,—you taught me to spell the 4 day of the week, but my aunt says that it should be spelt wednesday. My aunt also says, that till I come out of an egregious fit of laughter that is apt to seize me & the violence of which I am at this present under, neither English sense, nor anything rational may be expected of me. I went to say, that, I went to Mrs Whitwells to see Mad'm Storer's funeral, the walking was very bad except on the sides of the street which was the reason I did not make a part of the procession. I should have dined with Mrs Whitwell on thursday if a grand storm had not prevented. As she invited me. I saw Miss Caty Vans at lecture last evening.

Dec.r 24th—Elder Whitwell told my aunt, that this winter began as did the winter of 1740. How that was I don't remember but this I know, that today is by far the coldest we have had since I have been in New England. (N. B. All run that are abroad)

Last sabbath being rainy I went to and from meeting in Mr. Soley's chaise. I dined at unkle Winslow's, the walking being so bad I rode there & back to meeting. Every drop that fell froze, so that from yesterday morning to this time the appearance has been similar to the description I sent you last winter. The walking is so slippery and the air so cold, that aunt chuses to have me for

The Christmas holidays of a Puritan Girl, being
extracts from the diary of Anna Green Winslow



Dec^r 14th 1771—The weather & walking have been very winter like since the above hotch-potch pothooks & trammels. I went to Mrs. Whitwells last wednesday—you taught me to spell the 4 day of the week, but my aunt says that it should be spell wednesday. My aunt also says that till I come out of an egregious

fit of laughter that is apt to seize me & the violence of which I am at this present under, neither English sense, nor anything rational may be expected of me. I went to say that I went to Mrs. Whitwells to see Madm. Lovers funeral.

Dec^r 24th—today is by far the coldest we have had since I have been in New England. (O! all run that are abroad) The walking is so slippery and the air so cold that aunt chuses to have me for her scollar these two days. And as tomorrow is a holiday, so the pope and his associates have ordained, my aunt thinks not to trouble Mrs. Smith with me this week. I began a shill at home yesterday for myself, it is pretty forward. I forget whether I mentioned the receipt of Wangs present. Ann obliged to her for it.

Dec^r 27th—this day the extremity of the cold is somewhat abated. I kept Christmas at home this year & did a very good days work, aunt says so. How notable have been this week I shall tell you by & by. I spent most of Tuesday evening with my favorite Miss. Soles. Mrs. she is confined by a cold, the weather still so severe that I cannot sit farther, I am to visit her again before I sleep & consult with her, or rather she with me upon a particular matter which you shall know in its place. How strangely industrious have been this week I will inform you with my own hand—at present I am so diligent that



I am obliged to use the hand & pen of my old friend, who being near by is better than a brother far off. I don't forget dear little John Henry so pray mamma, don't mistake me.



I am glad my brother made an essay for a Post Script to your letter. I must get him to read it to me, when he comes up for two reasons, the one is because I may have the pleasure of hearing his voice, the other because I don't understand his characters. I observe that he is mamma's *Ducky Darling*.



Decr 25th - Last evening a little after 5 o'clock I finished my shift. I spent the evening at Mr. Soler's. I began my shift at 12 o'clock last Monday. have read my Bible every day this week & wrote every day, save one.

Jan^y 1st 1772. I wish my Papa, Mama, brother John Henry & Cousin Avery & all the rest of my acquaintance at Cumberland, Fort Laurence, Barrowsfield, Greenland, Umberst &c. a Happy New Year. I have bestowed no new year's gift as yet. But have received one very handsome one viz the History of Joseph Andrews abbreviated. In nice Gilt & flowers coverd. This afternoon being a holiday I am going to pay my compliments in Sudbury Street.

Jan^y 4th - I was dressed in my yellow coat, my black bib & apron, my pompedore shoes, the cap my aunt Storer sometime since presented me with (blue ribbons on it) & a very handsome jacket in the shape of a hart she gave me - the post pin my fond Papa presented me with in my cap, my new cloak & bonnet on, my pompedore gloves &c &c. and I would tell you that for the first time, they all liked my dress very much. My cloak & bonnet are really very handsome & so they had need be. For they cost an amasing sight of money, not quite £45 tho Aunt Sully said, that she supposed Aunt Deming would be frighted out of her wits at the money it cost. I have got one covering by the cost, that is penicel & I like it much myself.

I had my *RED DRESS* roll on, aunt Storer said it ought to be made less, Aunt Deming said it ought not to be made at all. It makes my head itch & ach & burn like anything Mamma. This famous roll is not made wholly of a red Cow tail,



Water little -

THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS OF A PURITAN GIRL 11

her scollar these two days. And as tomorrow will be a holiday, so the pope and his associates have ordained, my aunt thinks not to trouble Mrs Smith with me this week. I began a shift at home yesterday for myself, it is pretty forward. I forgot whether I mentioned the receipt of Nancy's present. I am obliged to her for it. The Dolphin is still whole. And like to remain so.

Dec'r 27th—This day, the extremity of the cold is somewhat abated. I kept Christmas at home this year, & did a very good day's work, aunt says so. How notable I have been this week I shall tell you by & by. I spent most of Tuesday evening with my favorite, Miss Soley, as she is confined by a cold, the weather still so severe that I cannot git farther, I am to visit her again before I sleep, & consult with her, (or rather she with me) upon a perticular matter which you shall know in its place. How strangely industrious I have been this week, I will inform you with my own hand—at present, I am so diligent that I am obliged to use the hand & pen of my old friend, who being near by is better than a brother far off. I don't forget dear little John Henry so pray mamma, don't mistake me.

I am glad my brother made an essay for a Post Script to your Letter. I must get him to read it to me, when he comes up, for two reasons, the one is because I may have the pleasure of hearing his voice, the other because I don't understand his carachters. I observe that he is mamma's "Duckey Darling."

Dec'r 28th—Last evening a little after 5 oclock I finished my shift, I spent the evening at Mr. Soley's. I began my shift at 12 o'clock last Monday, have read my Bible every day this week and wrote every day save one.

1st. Jan.y 1772—I wish my papa, Mama, brother John Henry, & Cousin Avery & all the rest of my acquaintance at Cumberland, Fortlaurence, Barrowsfield, Greenland, Amherst & c. a Happy New Year, I have bestow'd no new year's gift, as yet. But have received one very handsome one, viz, the History of Joseph Andrews abbreviated. In nice Guilt and flowers covers. This afternoon being a holiday I am going to pay my compliments in Sudbury Street.

Jan.y 4th 1772—I was drssed in my yellow coat, my black bib & apron, my pompedore shoes, the cap my aunt Storer sometime since presented me with—(blue ribbons on it) & a very handsome locket in the shape of a hart she gave me—the past pin my Hon'd Papa presented me with in my cap, my new cloak & bonnet on, my pompedore gloves &c, &c. And I would tell you that for the first time, they all liked my dress very much. My cloak and bonnett are really very handsome, & so they had need be. For they cost an amasing sight of money, not quite £45 tho' Aunt Suky said, that she supposed Aunt Deming would be frighted out of her wits at the money it cost. I have got one covering, by the cost, that is genteel & I like it much myself. * * * *. I had my HEDDUS roll on, aunt Storer said it ought to be made less, Aunt Deming said it ought not to be made at all. It makes my head itch & ach & burn like anything Mamma. This famous roll is not made wholly of a red Cow Tail but is a mixture of that & horsehair (very course) & a little human hair of yellow hue, that I suppose was taken out of the back part of an old wig. But D— made it (our head) all carded together and twisted up. When it first came home, Aunt put it on & my new cap on it, and she took up her apron and mesur'd me, & from the roots of my hair on my forehead to the top of my notions I measured above an inch longer than I did downwards from the

but is a mixture of that & horsehair (very coarse) & a little human hair of yellow hue, that I suppose was taken out of the back part of an old wig.

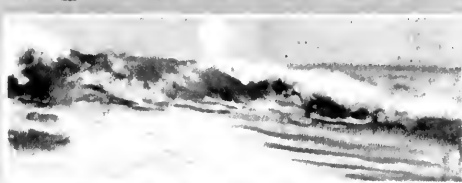
But I made it (our head) all corded together & twisted up. When it first came home Aunt put it on & my new cap on it, & she took up her apron & measured me, & from the roots of my hair on my forehead to the top of my notions I measured above an inch longer than I did downwards from

the roots of my hair to the end of my chin. Nothing renders a young person more amiable than virtue & modesty without the help of false hair, red *low cut* or the barber. Now all this mamma I have just been reading over to my Aunt.

She hopes a little false English will not spoil the whole with Mammy. Some was not built in a day.

My grand-mamma sent Miss Deming to Miss Winslow & I owe eight of a dollar a piece for a new year's gift.

I am
Your Papa & Mama
Your ever faithful
Daughter
Miss Green
Winslow



THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS OF A PURITAN GIRL 13

roots of my hair to the end of my chin. Nothing renders a young person more amiable than virtue & modesty without the help of fals hair, red Cow Tail or D— (the barber.) Now all this mamma, I have just been reading over to my Aunt. * * * * * She hopes a little fals English will not spoil the whole with Mamma. Rome was not build in a day. * * * * * My grandmamma sent Miss Deming, Miss Winslow & I one eight of a Dollar a piece for a New Years gift.

I am Hon,d Papa & Mama

Yr. ever Dutiful Daughter,

Anne Green Winslow

Contemporary Account, New York, 1773

“Last Monday the anniversary of St. Nicholas, otherwise called Santa Claus, was celebrated at Protestant Hall, at Mr. L. Waldron’s where a great number of the sons of that ancient saint celebrated the day with great joy and festivity.



Christmas Fairy-tales

A Notable Christmas with Washington

(In camp above Trenton Falls, Dec. 23, 1776)

“Christmas day at night, one hour before day, is the time fixed for our attempt on Trenton. For Heaven’s sake keep this to yourself, as the discovery of it may prove fatal to us.” Washington to Col. Codwalader. On Christmas night Washington crossed the Delaware, surprising the Hessians in Trenton on the morning of the 26th, and capturing nearly a thousand prisoners with their arms. On Friday, Dec. 27 he sent the following message to the President of Congress:

“I have the pleasure of congratulating you upon the success of an enterprise, which I had formed against a detachment of the enemy lying in Trenton, and which was executed yesterday morning”

A Quiet Christmas with Washington in New York

Friday, Dec 25th—Christmas Day. Went to St. Pauls Chapel in the forenoon. The visitors to Mrs. Washington this afternoon were not numerous, but respectable.

Washington's Diary.

A Christmas Eve Dinner with George and Martha Washington

(Being a letter from Theophilus Bradbury to his daughter, Mrs. Hooper)

Philadelphia, Sat. Dec. 26—1795.

Last Thursday I had the honor of dining with the President in company with the Vice President, the Senators, the Delegates of Massachusetts, and some other members of Congress, about 20, in all.

In the middle of the table was placed a piece of table furniture about six feet long and two feet wide, rounded at the ends. It was either of wood gilded, or polished metal, raised about an inch with a silver rim round it like that round a tea board; in the centre was a pedestal of plaster of Paris with images upon it, and on each end figures, male and female, of the same. It was very elegant and used for ornament only. The dishes were placed all around, and there was an elegant variety of roast beef, veal, turkeys, ducks, fowls, hams, etc.; puddings, jellies, oranges, apples, nuts, almonds, figs, raisins, and a variety of wines and punch.

We took our leave at six, more than an hour after the candles were introduced. No lady but Mrs. Washington dined with us. We were waited on by four or five men servants dressed in livery.

Christmas with Washington at Mt. Vernon

The wife of Judge Cushing writes in February, 1799:—

“We reached Mount Vernon the evening before Christmas, and if anything could have added to our enjoyment, it was the arrival of General and Mrs Pinckney the next day, while we were dining. You may be sure it was a joyful meeting, and at the very place my wishes had pointed out. To be in the company of so many esteemed friends, to hear our good General Washington converse upon political subjects without reserve, and to hear General and Mrs Pinckney relate what they saw and heard in France, was truly a feast to me. Thus the moments glided away for two days, when our reason pointed out the propriety of our departing and improving the good roads, as the snow and frost had made them better than they are in summer.



Christmas Festivities in Philadelphia. Dec. 26, 1789

Rudolph's the following gentlemen, Samuel Miles, Levi Hollingsworth, Israel Morris, Joseph Jones, went to Lower Tincum fox hunting. There we were met by Charles, Richard and James VVilling, and after riding about the woods until two o'clock, without the sign of a fox, we returned to Joseph Rudolph's & dined.

Dec. 23, 1785- My son Thomas came home to spend Christmas with us. In the afternoon took a ride and stopped at Thos. Hopkinson's to see his colts.

Dec. 25, 1786- Christmas day, clear and cold. Forenoon went to church in Race St.. My wife and I dined at General Mifflin's with his family, and the Hon. Gerard VVynkoop, Capt. N. Falkner and wife. My son William brought Capt. Falkner and wife to the General's in a sleigh and took them home.

Dec. 25, 1787- Christmas. VVe three went to Reading by invitation of Gen. D. Brodhead and dined with him. There were nine at the table: Mr. C. Read, Mr. Dundass, Mr. D. Clymer, Mr. Moore, Gen. Mifflin, Captain Faulkner and myself. *Jacob Fultzheimer*

The Christmas Season in Philadelphia

Dec. 26—1767.—From Rudolph's the following gentlemen, Samuel Miles, Levi Hollingsworth, Israel Morris, Joseph Jones * * went to Lower Tinicum fox hunting. There we were met by Charles, Richard, and James Willing, and after riding about the woods until two o'clock, without the sign of a fox, we returned to Joseph Rudolph's and dined.

Dec. 23—1785—My son Thomas came home to spend Christmas with us. In the afternoon took a ride to William Standley's place at Point no Point, and stopped at Thomas Hopkinson's to see his colts.

Dec. 25—1786—Christmas day, clear and cold. Forenoon went to church in Race Street. My wife and I dined at General Mifflins with his family, and the Hon. Gerardus Wynkoop, Capt. N. Falkner and wife. My son William brought Capt. Falkner and wife to the General's in a sleigh and took them home.

Dec. 25—1787—Christmas. We three went to Reading by invitation of Gen. D. Brodhead and dined with him. There were nine at the table: Mr. C. Read, Mr. Dundass, Mr. D. Clymer, Mr. Moore, Gen. Mifflin, Captain Faulkner and myself.

Diary of Jacob Hiltzheimer.

Member of State Assembly

Christmas in Salem, 1780-87

Dec. 25, 1780—Christmas, and rainy. Dined at Mr. Wetmore's with Mr. Goodale and family, John, and Patty. Mr. Barnard and Prince at church; the music good and Dr. Steward's voice above all.

Dec. 25, 1782—A very fine, clear day. The church very much crowded with well dressed people. Mr. Fisher movingly addressed the people of his church and congregation in the close of his sermon, relating to their conduct, their morals and proffession as Christians, exhorting them to sobriety and decency of behaviour on the solemn and joyful occasion. In the evening at Mr. Wetmore's and sup there; a large company.

Dec. 25, 1783,—Christmas Day; very cold; some snow. Mrs P. and I dine at home and have a comfortable Christmas to ourselves, having sufficient elbowroom and a warm fireside. Jno. and Mrs Goodale's family dine at Mr. Wetmore's.

Dec. 25, 1784—Cold Christmas. Mrs. P. ill, and I confined by a cold, we dine by ourselves at a good warm fire. Mr. & Mrs Curwen spend the evening with us. * *

Dec. 25 1787—Very cold. * * Mrs Pynchon, John & I dine at W. Cabots and had a most excellent and tasty dinner done by Miss Gerrish.

Diary of William Pynchon.



Christmas at Valley Forge

Dec. 21—1777—. Preparation made for hutts. Provision scarce. Mr. Ellis went homeward—sent a Letter to my Wife. Heartily wish myself at home—my Skin & eyes are almost spoil'd with continual smoke.

A general cry thro' the Camp this Evening among the Soldiers—'No Meat!—No Meat!'—the distant vales Ech'od back the melancholly sound—"No Meat! No Meat!" Immitating the noise of Crows & Owls, also, made a part of the confused Musick. What have you for our Dinners Boys? "Nothing but Fire Cake & Water, Sir." At night—"Gentlemen, the Supper is ready." What is your Supper, Lads? "Fire Cake & Water, Sir".

Dec. 22d.—Lay excessive Cold & uncomfortable last Night—my eyes are started from their Orbits like a Rabbit's eyes, occationed by a great Cold—and Smoke.

What have you got for Breakfast, Lads? "Fire Cake & Water, Sir". The Lord send that our Commissary of Purchase may live on Fire Cake & Water * * * *

Our Division are under Marching Orders this morning. I am ashamed to say it, but I am tempted to steal Fowls if I could find them—or even a whole Hog—for I feel as if I could eat one. But the Impoverish'd Country about us, affords but little matter to employ a Thief—or keep a Clever Fellow in good humour—But why do I talk of hunger & hard usage, when so many in the World have not even fire Cake & Water to eat * * * *

Dec. 23d—The Party that went out last evening not Return'd to Day. This evening an excellent Player on the Violin in that soft kind of Musick, which is so finely adapted to stirr up the tender Passions, while he was playing in the next tent to mine, these kind of soft Airs—it immediately called up in remembrance all the endearing expressions—the Tender Sentiments—the sympathetic friendship and sensible pleasure to me from the first time I gained the heart & affections of the tenderest of the Fair * * *

Dec. 24th—Party of the 22d returned. Hutts go on Slowly—Cold & Smoke make us fret. But mankind are always fretting, even if they have more than their proportion of the Blessings of Life. We are never Easy—always repining at the Providence of an All-wise & Benevolent Being—Blaming Our Country—or faulting our Friends. But I don't know of anything that vexes a man's Soul more than hot smoke continually blowing into his Eyes—& when he attempts to avoid it, is met by a cold and piercing Wind * * *

Dec. 25th, Christmas.—We are still in Tents—when we ought to be in huts—the poor Sick suffer much in Tents this cold Weather—But we now treat them differently from what they used to be at home, under the inspection of Old Women & Doct. Bolus Tinctus. We give them Mutton & Grogg—and a Capital Medicine once in a While—to start the Disease from its foundation at once. We avoid—Piddling Pills, Powders, Bolus's Tinctus's—Cordials, and all such insignificant matters whose powders are Only render'd important by causing the Patient to vomit up his money instead of his disease. But very few of the sick Men Die.

Doctor Albigence Waldo.

Surgeon from Connecticut.

New Year's Day in Colonial Times

I had travelled far enough in the day to hope for a quiet sleep, but, at four in the morning, I was awakened by a musquet fired close to my windows: I listened, but heard not the smallest noise, or motion in the street, which made me imagine it was some musquet discharged of itself without causing any accident. I again attempted to go to sleep, but a quarter of a hour after a fresh musquet or pistol shot interrupted my repose; this was followed by several others; so that I had no longer any doubt that it was some rejoicing, or feast, like our village christenings. The hour indeed struck me as rather unusual, but at length a number of voices mingled with musquettry, crying out, new year, reminded me that we were at the first of January and concluded that it was thus the Americans celebrate that event. Though this manner of proclaiming it was not, I must own, very pleasing to me, there was nothing for it but patience; but at the end of half an hour, I heard a confused noise of upwards of a hundred persons, chiefly children or young people, assembled under my windows, and I very soon had farther indication of their proximity, for they fired several musquet shot, knocked rudely at the door, and threw stones against my windows. Cold and indolence still kept me in bed, but Mr. Lynch got up and came into my chamber to tell me that these people certainly meant to do me honour, and get some money from me. I desired him to step down and give them two Louis; he found them already masters of the house and drinking my landlord's rum. In a quarter of an hour, they went off to visit other streets, and continued their noise till

day-light. On rising, I learnt from my landlord, that it was the custom of the country for the young folks, the servants, and even the negroes, to go from tavern to tavern, and to other houses, to wish a good new year, and ask for a drink, so that there was no particular compliment to me in this affair, and I found that, after the example of the Roman Emperors, I had made a largess to the people. In the morning, when I went to take leave of General Clinton I met nobody but drunken people in the streets, but what astonished me most was to see them not only walk, but run upon the ice without falling or making a false step, whilst it was with the utmost difficulty I kept upon my legs.

Marquis de Chastellux.

New Year's Day, 1790

“Friday 1st.—The Vice President, the Governor, the Senators, Members of the House of Representatives in town, foreign public caracters, and all the respectable citizens, came between the hours of 12 and 3 o'clock, to pay the compliments of the season to me—and in the afternoon a great number of gentlemen and ladies visited Mrs. Washington on the same occasion.

Washington's Diary.

New Year's Day in Boston

Jan. 1, 1723

New Year's day, before Sun-rise being up, I hear the Guns of the Frigat, and Castle, 11 from the first, 21 from the Castle, which is the Signal of the Governour's sailing.

Samuel Sewall.

New Year's Day in Philadelphia

Philadelphia, Jan. 1, 1767—Very, very cold. Delaware frozen over. Three sleighloads of us went to Darby to Joseph Rudolph's.

Diary of Jacob Hiltzheimer.

A Festive New Year's in Salem

Jan. 1 1783 Wednesday. Clear and very cold. A concert in the evening in the new Assembly Room; a dance for the young gentry at Mrs Pickman's. Da Sears in town, called on me.

2. Thursday. A fine, pleasant morning. Musick at the Assembly Room: 2 fiddles, F., horn, and drum. These and the Assembly engross the conversation and attention of the young and gay; the elders shake their heads with, What are we coming to? * * A private dance preparatory to the assembly.

7. Tuesday. Cloudy and Cold * * Fine sledding; the street is so filled with sleds, etc., of wood that there was scarce any passing. A dance at Bro. Goodale's in the evening.

8. Wednesday. * * Grafton, Jno. and Co. go to a dance at Endicot's; return at 12.

9. Thursday. A dance at Grafton's.

Diary of William Pynchon.



Festive Holiday Season in Salem

Christmas, 1782. Mr. Fisher movingly addressed the people of his church and congregation, relating to their conduct, exhorting them to sobriety & decency of behaviour on the solemn and joy-

ous occasion. In the evening at Mr. Wetmore's and sup there. A large company.

Jan. 11783. A concert in the evening in the new Assembly Room: a dance for the young gentry at Mrs. Pickman's. 21 Thursday. Musick at the Assembly Room: 2 fiddles, f. horn & drum. These and the assembly engross the conversation and attention of the young and gay; the elders shake their heads with, What are we coming to?

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9. Thursday. A dance at Grafton's.

From the Diary of Wm. Pynchon



St. Valentine's Day.—A Curious St. Valentine's Custom

“Last Friday was St. Valentine's Day, and the night before I got five bay leaves and pinned four on the corners of my pillow, and the fifth to the middle; and then if I dreamt of my sweetheart, Betty said we should be married before the year was out. But to make it more sure I boiled an egg hard and took out the yolk and filled it with salt; and when I went to bed ate it shell and all, without speaking or drinking after it. We also wrote our lovers' names upon bits of paper, and rolled them up in clay and put them into water; and the first that rose up was to be our Valentine. Would you think it? Mr. Blossom was my man. I lay abed and shut my eyes all the morning, till he came to our house, for I would not have seen another man before him for all the world.”

The Connoisseur, of 1754.

Valentine's Day, 1772

My cousin Sally reeled off a 10 knot skane of yarn today. My valentine was an old country plow joger. The yarn was of my spinning. Aunt says it will do for filling. Aunt also says niece is a whimsical child.

Anna Green Winslow.





Valentines

Madame Pepys' Valentine

"This morning came up to my wife's bedside little Will Mercer to be her valentine, and brought her name written upon blue paper in gold letters, done by himself, very pretty; and we were both well pleased with it. But I am also this year my wife's valentine; and it will cost me five pounds; but that I must have laid out if we had not been valentines."

Pepys' Diary, 1667.

Valentine's Day

Philadelphia, Feb. 14, 1767—At noon went to William Jones's to drink punch, met several of my friends, and got decently drunk.

Jacob Hiltzheimer.

Easter, 1688

Satterday Apr 14. Mr. West comes to Mr. Willard from the Governour to speak to him to begin at 8. in the morn, and says this shall be last time; they will build a house. Soe begin about $\frac{1}{2}$ hour past 8. Yet the people come pretty roundly together. 'Twas Easter-day, and the Lord's Supper with us too.

Samuel Sewall.

Boston

April 17th 1772— * * The bell is ringing for good friday.

Anna Green Winslow.

All Fool's Day

'The First of April, some do say,
Is set apart for all Fool's Day;
But why the people call it so
Nor I, nor they themselves, do know''.

Poor Robins' Almanack, 1760.

Boston, April 1, 1772—"Will you be offended mamma, if I ask you, if you remember the flock of wild Geese that papa call'd you to see flying over the Blacksmith's shop this day three years? I hope not; I only mean to divert you. The snow is near gone in the street before us, & mud supplies the place thereof; after a week's absence, I this day attended Master Holbrook with some difficulty, what was last week a pond is to-day a quag, thro' which I got safe however, & if aunt had known it was so bad, she saís she would not have sent me, but I neither wet my feet, nor drabled my clothes, indeed I have but one garment that I could contrive to drabble.

N. B. It is 1 April.

Anna Green Winslow.

Gov. Bradford's Account of the May Day Celebration at Ma-re Mount

They also set up a May-pole, drinking and dancing about it many days together, inviting the Indian women, for their consorts, dancing and frisking together, (like so many fairies, or furies rather) and worse practices. As they they had anew revived and celebrated the feasts of the Roman Goddess Flora, or the beastly practices of the Mad Bacchinalians. Morton likewise, (to shew his poetrie) composed sundry rimes and verses, some tending to lasciviousnes, and others to the detraction and scandall of some persons, which he affixed to this idle or idoll May pole. They chainged also the name of their place, and in stead of calling it Mounte Wollaston, they call it Meriemounte, as if this joylity would have lasted ever. But this continued not long, for after Morton was sent for England, (as follows to be declared) shortly after came over that worthy gentleman, Mr. John Indecott, who brought over a patent under the broad seall, for the govermente of the Massachusetts, who visiting those parts caused that May-pole to be cutte downe, and rebuked them for their profannes, and admonished them to looke ther should be better walking; so they now, or others, changed the name of their place againe, and called it Mounte-Dagon.

William Bradford, 1628.



Queen of the May

the precise seperatists: that lived at new Plimmouth. They termed it an Idoll; yea they called it the Calfe of Horeb: and stood at defiance with the place, naming it Mount Dagon; threatning to make it a woefull mount and not a merry mount * * *

There was likewise a merry songe made, which (to make their Revels more fashionable) was sung with a Corus, every man bearing his part; which they performed in a daunce, hand in hand about the Maypole, whiles one of the Company sung, and filled out the good liquor like gammedes and Iupiter.

The Songe

Drinke and be merry, merry. merry boyes,
 Let all your delight be in Hymen's ioyes,
 Io to Hymen now the day is come,
 About the merry Maypole take a Roome.

Make greene garlons, bring bottles out;
 And fill sweet Nectar, freely about,
 Vncover thy head, and feare no harme,
 For hers good liquor to keepe it warme.

Then drinke and be merry, &c
 Io to Hymen, &c

Nectar is a thing assign'd
 By the Deities owne minde,
 To cure the hart opprest with greife,
 And of good liquors is the cheife,

Then drinke, &c.

COLONIAL HOLIDAYS

Give to the Mellancolly man,
 A cup or two of't now and than;
 This physick' will soone revive his bloud,
 And make him be of a merrier moode.

Then drinke, &c

Give to the Nympe thats free from scorne,
 No Irish stuff nor Scotch over worne,
 Lasses in beaver coats come away,
 Yee shall be welcome to us night and day.

To drinke and be merry &c.

This harmless mirth made by younge men (that lived in hope to have wives brought over to them, that would save them a labour to make a voyage to fetch any over) was much distasted, of the precise Seperatists; that keepe much a doe, about the tyth of Muir and Cummin; troubling their braines more than reason would require about things that are different and from that time sought occasion against my honest Host of Ma're Mount to overthrow his undertakings, and to destroy his plantation quite and cleane" * *

Thomas Morton.

An Amusing May Day Incident

Mrs. Alice Morse Earle in her excellent book, *Stage Coach and Tavern Days*, gives an account of a bit of rather un-puritanical merry-making on the part of Jacob Murline and Sarah Tuttle in Hartford on May Day, 1660. In spite of a very stringent law prohibiting any love making without consent of parents, Jacob seized Sarah's gloves and demanded a kiss as a forfeit. "Whereupon they sat down together, his arm being about her, and her arm upon his shoulder or about his neck, so says the old Puritan chronicler, "and hee kissed her and shee kissed him, or they kissed one another, continuing in this posture about half an hour." Sarah's father had Jacob dragged into court on a charge of "inveagling" his daughter's affections, and things looked rather black for him, when Sarah changed the aspect of the case materially by informing the Court that Jacob did not inveigle her; she wanted to be kissed, and had enticed him. The Court then imposed a fine upon Sarah, which her father had to pay, and she was admonished as a "Bould Virgin" to watch her ways more carefully. She said "that she hoped God would help her to Carry it Better for time to come."

Independence Day with Washington

Sunday, July 4th 1790.

“Went to Trinity Church in the forenoon. This day being the Anniversary of the declaration of Independence the celebration of it was put off until to morrow.

Monday 5th.

The members of the Senate, House of Representatives, Public Officers, Foreign Characters &c., The Members of the Cincinnati, Officers of the Militia &c., came with the compliments of the day to me—about one o'clock a sensible Oration was delivered in St. Paul's Chapel by Mr. Brockholst Livingston, on the occasion of the day—the tendency of which was to show the different situation we are now in, under an excellent government of our own choice, to what it would have been if we had not succeeded in our opposition to the attempts of Great Britain to enslave us; and how much we ought to cherish the blessings which are within our reach, & to cultivate the seeds of harmony & unanimity in all our public Councils.—There were several other points touched upon in sensible manner.

“In the afternoon many Gentlemen & ladies visited Mrs. Washington.

“I was informed this day by General Irvine (who recd. the acct. from Pittsburg) that the Traitor Arnold was at Detroit & had viewed the Militia in the Neighbourhood of it twice.—This had occasioned much Speculation in those parts—and with many other circumstances—though trifling in themselves led strongly to a conjecture that the British had some design on the Spanish settlements on the Mississipi and of course to surround these United States.”

Washington's Diary.

Independence Day

Philadelphia

July 4—1781—Fireworks at State House.

July 4—1783—In the afternoon a triumphal car, prepared by Mr. Mason, attended by a number of boys and girls dressed in white, was paraded through the streets of the city, this being the memorable day independence was declared.

July 4—1786—Forenoon went to church in Race Street to hear Major William Jackson's oration delivered to the Pennsylvania Society of the Cincinnati. Afternoon went to Governor Samuel Morris's fishing house on Isaac Warner's place, and there dined on fish and beefsteaks. * * * *

Jacob Hiltzheimer.

A Curious Ode to Independence Day

(Written about the year 1800 and first published in the Farmer's Museum in Massachusetts.)

Squeak the fife and beat the drum,
Independence Day is come!!
Let the roasting pig be bled,
Quick twist off the rooster's head,
Quickly rub the pewter platter,
Heap the nut cakes fried in butter,
Set the cups and beaker glass,
The pumpkin and the apple sauce.
Send the keg to shop for brandy;
Maple sugar we have handy.
Independent, staggering Dick,
A noggin mix of swinging thick;
Sal, put on your russel skirt,
Jotham, get your boughten shirt,
Today we dance to tiddle-tiddle—
Here comes Sambo with his fiddle;
Sambo, take a draw of whiskey,
And play up Yankee Doodle frisky,
Moll, come leave your witched tricks,
And let us have a reel of six—
Father and Mother shall make two;
Sall, Moll, and I stand all a row,
Sambo, play and dance polity;
This is the day of blest equality,—

Father and Mother are but men,
And Sambo is a citizen.
Come, foot it, Sal; Moll, figure in,
And, mother, you dance up to him;
Now saw as fast as e'er you can do,
And, father, you cross over to Sambo.
Thus we dance and thus we play,
On glorious Independence Day.
Rub more rosin on your bow,
And let us have another go—
Zounds! as sure as eggs and bacon,
Here's Ensign Sneak and Uncle Deacon,
Aunt Thiah, and their Bet's behind her
On blundering mare, that beetle blinder—
And there's the Squire, too, with his lady—
Sal, hold the beast, I'll take the baby!
Moll, bring the Squire our great arm-chair,
Good folks we're glad to see you here—
Jotham, get the great case bottle,
Your teeth can draw the corn-cob stopple—
Ensign, Deacon, never mind;
Squire, drink until you're blind.

A Celebration of the Queen's Birthday in Boston, 1714

(From the Diary of Samuel Sewall.)

My neighbor Colson knocks at my door about nine P. M., or past, to tell of disorders at the ordinary at the South End, kept by Mr. Wallace. He desired me that I would accompany Mr. Bromfield and Constable Howell hither. It was 35 minutes past nine before Mr. Bromfield came, then we went, took Æneas Salter with us. Found much company. They refused to go away. Said was there to drink the Queen's health and had many other healths to drink. Called for more drink and drank to me: I took notice of the affront, to them. Said they must and would stay upon that solemn occasion. Mr. Netmaker drank the Queen's health to me. I told him I drank none; on that he ceased. Mr. Brinley put on his hat to affront me. I made him take it off. I threatened to send some of them to prison. They said they could but pay their fine, and doing that might stay. I told them if they had not a care they would be guilty of a riot. Mr. Bromfield spake of raising a number of men to quell them, and was in heat ready to run into the street. But I did not like that. Not having pen and ink I went to take their names with my pencil, and not knowing how to spell their names they themselves of their own accord writ them. At last I addressed myself to Mr. Banister. I told him he had been longest an inhabitant and freeholder and I expected he would set a good example by departing thence. Upon this he invited them to his own house, and away they went. And we after them went away.



In Grandmother's Gown



Celebration of Royal Birthdays in New York

His Majesty's Birthday, was observed here with the usual solemnity. Between the hours of eleven and twelve in the forenoon, his Excellency, our Governour was attended at his house in Fort George by the Council, Assembly, Merchants, and other Principal Gentlemen and Inhabitants of this and the adjacent Places. The Independent Companies posted here being under Arms and the Cannon round the Ramparts firing while His Majesty, the Queen's, the Prince's, the Royal Families, and their Royal Highnesses, the Prince and Princess of Orange's Healths were drunk; and thus followed the Healths of his Grace, the Duke of New-Castle, of the Duke of Grafton, of the Right Honorable Sir Robert Walpole, and many other Royal Healths. In the Evening the whole City was illuminated, his Excellency and Lady gave a splendid Ball and Supper at the Fort, where was the most Numerous and fine Appearance of Ladies and Gentlemen that had ever been known upon the Like occasion"

Original account of the King's Birthday, 1734.

"The Evening was concluded with all demonstrations of Loyalty and Joy. There was a Ball and Entertainment at the Fort at which the Appearance of Gentlemen and Ladies was very splendid, many of them in New Cloaths and very rich in Honor of the Day"

King's Birthday, 1735.

The Prince of Wales's Birthday was celebrated at the Black Horse in a most elegant and genteel Manner. There was a most magnificent Appearance of Gentlemen and Ladies. The Ball began with French Dances, and then the Company proceeded to Country Dances, upon which Mrs Norris led up two new Country Dances made upon the Occasion; the first of which was called The Prince of Wales, and the second The Princess of Saxe-Gotha, in Honour of the Day. There was a most sumptuous entertainment afterward. At the conclusion of which the Honourable Rip Van Dam, Esq., president of His Majesty's Council began the Royal Healths, which were all drank in Bumpers. The whole was conducted with the utmost Decency, Mirth and Cheerfulness".

(1736)

The King's Birthday

Boston

Oct. 30th—1750 Went to the Ship, Weatherheads and to Change, from thence went and Dynd at Capt. Wendells. Being his Majesties Birthday the Loyal healths were drank. we haveing an Invitation from Mr. Thomas Pierson Spent the Evening with him Singing Songs Drinking Loyal Toasts &c being Joynd by the Ladies, who shewed their Loyalty by accomp'y us Singing &c. I Omitted, at noone went with Capt. Wendell to the Councill Chamber in the Towne House where drank the Loyall Toasts with the Lieutt Governr Council &c''

Journal of Capt. Francis Goelet.

A "Turtle Frolick" in 1750

Boston

October 2^d 1750. Had an Invitation to day to Go to a Turtle Frolick with a Compy of Gentⁿ and Ladies at Mr Richardson's in Cambridge, abt 6 miles from Towne. I accordingly waited on Miss Betty Wendell with a Chaise, who was my Partner, the Companie Consisted of about 20 Couple Gentⁿ and Ladies of the Best Fashion in Boston, viz. the two Miss Phips, Lu^t Govern^r Daughters, the Miss Childs, Miss Quincys, Miss Wendells &c. Danced Several Minuits and Country Dances, and where very Merry about Dusk we all rode Home, and See our Partners safe, and Spent the Evening at Capt. Maglachlins &c.

Journal of Capt. Francis Goelet.

Programme for a Celebration of St. Andrew's Day in Old Virginia

Williamsburg, Oct. 7, 1737

"We have Advice from Hanover County, That on St. Andrew's Day, being on the 30th of November next, there are to be Horse Races and several other Diversions, for the Entertainment of Gentlemen and Ladies, at the Old Field near Capt. John Bickerton's in that County, (if permitted by the Hon. William Byrd, Esq., Proprietor of the said Land) The Substance of which are to be as follows, viz:

"It is propos'd, that 20 Horses or Mares do run round a Three Mile Course, for a Prize of the Value of Five Pounds, according to the usual Rules of Racing; That every horse that runs shall be first enter'd with Mr. Joseph Fox, and that no Person have the Liberty of putting in a Horse, unless he is a Subscriber toward defraying the Expence of this Entertainment, and pay to Mr. Fox Half a Pistole of it at entring his Horse.

"That a Hat of the Value of 20s. be cudgell'd for, and that after the first Challenge made, the Drums are to beat, once every Quarter of an Hour, for Three Challenges round the Ring; on no Answer made, the Person Challenging to be entitled to the Prize; and none to Play with their Left Hand.

"That a Violin be played for by 20 Fiddlers, and to be given to him that shall be adjudged to play the best: No Person to have the Liberty of playing, unless he brings a Fiddle with him. After the Prize is won, they are all to play together, and each a different Tune: and to be treated by the Company.

"That 12 Boys of 12 years of Age do run 112 Yards for a Hat of the Value of 12 Shillings.

"That a Flag be flying on the said Day 30 Feet high.

"That a handsome Entertainment be provided for the Subscribers and their Wives; and such of them who are not as happy as to have wives, may treat any other Lady. And that convenient Booths be erected for that Purpose.

"That Drums, Trumpets, Haut boys, &c. will be provided, to play at the said Entertainment.

"That after Dinner, The Royal Healths, his Honour the Governor's &c. are to be drank.

"That a Quire of Ballads be sung for, by a Number of Songsters, The best Songster to have the Prize, and all of them to have Liquor sufficient to clear their Wind Pipes.

"That a Pair of Silver Buckles be Wrestled for, by a certain Number of brisk young Men.

"That a Pair of handsome Silk Stockings of One Pistole Value, be given to the handsomest young Country Maid that appears in the Field; With many other whimsical and Comical Diversions, too tedious to mention here.

"The Horse Race is to be run that day, fair or foul, but if foul, the other diversions are to be continued the next day.

"The Subscription Money to be paid on the said Day in the Field; and Notice will be there given, who is to receive it.

"And as this Mirth is design'd to be purely innocent and void of Offence, all Persons resorting there are desir'd to behave themselves with Decency and Sobriety; the Subscribers being resolved to discountenance all Immorality with the utmost Rigour.

Virginia Gazette.



Election Day

“Who blew up the ship?
Nigger, why for?
'Cause he couldn't go to 'lection
An shake paw-paw”

In 1817 a negro boy, William Read, blew up a ship, the Canton Packet, in Boston Harbor because he was not allowed to partake of the festivities of “Artillery Election.” The above verse resulted from the incident. Paw-Paw was a game of chance in which sea shells were used as dice. Negroes were allowed on the Common only at “Nigger 'Llection”

The First Thanksgiving Held in North America

The Frobisher Expedition on shores of Newfoundland, 1578

“In primus:—to banish swearing, dice and card playing, and filthy communication, and to serve God twice a day, with the ordinary services of the Church of England. On Monday morning, May twenty-seventh, 1578, aboard the *Ayde*, we received all, the communion by the minister of Gravesend, prepared as good Christians toward God, and resolute men for all fortunes; and toward night we departed toward Tilbury Hope. Here we highly prayed God, and altogether, upon our knees, gave him due humble and hearty thanks, and Maister Wolfall, a learned man appointed by minister, made unto us a goodlye sermon, exhorting all especially to be thankful to God for His strange and marvelous deliverance in those dangerous places”.

A Thanksgiving at Sagadahoc in 1607

“Sundaye being the nineth of August, in the morninge, the most part of our hole company of both our ships, landed on this island, where the cross standeth, and thear we heard a sermon delyvred unto us by our preacher, giving God thanks for our happy meetinge and safe aryvall into this country; and so returned aboard again”.

Old Record.

Thanksgiving at Plymouth, 1621

All sorts of grain which our own land doth yield,
Was hither brought, and sown in every field:
As wheat and rye, barley, oats, beans and pease
Here all thrive and they profit from them raise,
All sorts of roots and herbs in gardens grow,—
Parsnips, carrotts, turnips or what you'll sow,
Onions, melons, cucumbers, radishes,
Skirets, beets, coleworts and fair cabbages.

Famine once we had—
But other things God gave us in full store,
As fish and ground nuts, to supply our strait,
That we might learn on providence to wait;
And know, by bread man lives not in his need,
But by each word that doth from God proceed.

Gov. Bradford.

The Harvest

They begane now to gather in the small harvest they had, and to fitte up their houses and dwellings against winter, being all well recovered in health and strength, and had all things in good plenty; for as some were thus imployed in affairs abroad, others were excersised in fishing, aboute codd, and bass, and other fish, of which they tooke good store, of which every family had their portion. All the sommer ther was no wante. And now begane to come in store of foule, as winter approached, of which this place did abound when they came first (but afterward decreased by degrees). And besides water foule, ther was great store of wild Turkies, of which they tooke many, besides venison, etc. Besids they had aboute a pecke of meale a weeke to a person, or now since harvest, Indian corne to that proportion. Which made many afterwards write so largely of their plenty hear to their freinds in England, which were not fained, but true reports.

Gov. Bradford

Turkies there are, which divers times in great flocks have sallied by our doores; and then a gunne (being commonly in redinesse) salutes them with such a courtesie, as makes them take a turne in the cooke room. They dance by the doore so well! Of these there hath bin killed, that have weighed forty-eight pound a piece * * The Beare is a tyrant at a lobster, and at low water will downe to the Rocks, and groape after them with great diligence. Hee will runne away from a man like a little dogge. If a couple of Salvages chance to espie him at his banquet, his running away will not serve his turne, for they will coate him and chase him between them home to their houses, where they kill him, to save a laboure in carrying him farre."

Thomas Morton.

The Festival

“Our harvests being gathered in, our governor sent foure men on fowling, so that we might after a more speciall manner rejoyce together, after we had gathered the fruit of our labors; they foure in one day killed as much fowle as with a little helpe beside, served the company almost a weeke, at which time amongst other recreations, we exercised our Armes, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and amongst the rest their greatest King Massasoyt, with some ninetie men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five deere, which they brought to the Plantation and bestowed on our Governor, and upon the Captaine (Standish) and others. And although it be not always so plentifull, as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodnesse of God, we are so farre from want that we often wish you partakers of our plentie.

Edward Winslow.

The Fast and Thanksgiving of 1623

"I may not here omite how, notwithstanding all their great paines and industrie, and the great hops of a large cropp, the Lord seemed to blast, and take away the same, and to threaten further and more sore famine unto them, by a great drought which continued from the 3 weeke in May, till about the midle of July, without any raine, and with great heat (for the most parte), insomuch as the corne begane to wither away, though it was set with fishe, the moysture whereof helped it much. Yet at length it begane to languish sore, and some of the drier grounds were parched like withered hay, part whereof was never recovered."

William Bradford.

"The most courageous were now discouraged, because God, which hitherto had been their only shield and supporter, now seemed in his anger to arm himself against them. These and like considerations moved not only every good man privately to enter into examination with his own estate between God and his conscience and so to humiliation before him, but also more solemnly to humble ourselves together before the Lord by fasting and prayer. To that end a day was appointed by public authority, and set apart from all other employments; hoping that the same God, which had stirred us up hereunto, would be moved hereby in mercy to look down upon us and grant the request of our dejected souls, if our continuance there might any way stand with his glory and our good. But O the mercy of God! who was as ready to hear as we to ask: for though

in the morning, when we assembled together, the heavens were as clear, and the drouth as like to continue as ever it was, yet (our exercise continuing some eight or nine hours) before our departure, the weather was overcast, the clouds gathered together on all sides, and on the next morning distilled such soft, sweet, and moderate showers of rain, continuing some fourteen days and mixed with such seasonable weather, as it was hard to say whether our withered corn, or drooping affections, were most quickened or revived; such was the bounty and goodness of God. Of this the Indians, by means of Hobbamock, took notice, who being then in the town, and this exercise in the midst of the week, said, it was but three days since Sunday, and therefore demanded of a boy, what was the reason thereof, which when he knew, and saw the effects followed thereupon, he and all of them admired the goodness of our God towards us, that wrought so great a change in so short a time, showing the difference between their conjuration, and our invocation on the name of God for rain, theirs being mixed with such storms and tempests, as sometimes, instead of doing them good, it layeth the corn flat on the ground, to their prejudice, but ours is in so gentle and seasonable a manner as they never observed the like. Having these many signs of God's favor and acceptation, we thought it would be great ingratitude, if secretly we should smother up the same, or content ourselves with private thanksgiving for that which by private prayer could not be obtained. And therefore another solemn day was set apart and appointed for that end; wherein we returned glory, honor, and praise, with all thankfulness, to our Good God, which dealt so graciously with us; whose name for these and all other his Mercies towards his church and chosen ones, by them be blessed and praised, now and evermore. Amen.

Edward Winslow.

A Thanksgiving with Anna Green Winslow

Boston, Nov., 1771

I guess I shall have but little time for journalizing till after thanksgiving. My aunt Deming says I shall make one pye myself at least. I hope somebody beside myself will like to eat a bit of my Boston pye thou' my papa and you did not (I remember) chuse to partake of my Cumberland performance. I think I have been writing my own Praises this morning. Poor Job was forced to praise himself when no man would do him that justice. I am not as he was * * *

Nov. 27th—* * Last monday I went with my aunt to visit Mrs Beacon. I was exceedingly pleased with the visit, & so I ought to be, my aunt says, for there was much notice taken of me, particularly by Mr. Beacon. I think I like him better every time I see him. I suppose he takes the kinder notice of me, because last Thursday evening he was here, & when I was out of the room, aunt told him that I minded his preaching & could repeat what he said—I might have told you that notwithstanding the stir about the Proclamation, we had an agreeable Thanksgiven. Mr. Hunt's text was Psal. XCVII. 1. The Lord reigneth,—let the earth rejoice. Mr. Beacon's text P. M. Psal. XXIV. 1. The earth is the Lord's & the fullness thereof. My unkle & aunt Winslow of Boston, their son & daughter, Master Daniel Mason, (Aunt Winslow's nephew from Newport, Rhode Island) & Miss Soley spent the evening with us. We young folk had a room with a fire in it to ourselves. Mr. Beacon gave us his company for one hour.

30th Nov—My company yesterday were

Miss Polly Deming
Polly Glover
Miss Peggy Draper
Miss Nancy Glover
Miss Bessie Winslow
Miss Sally Winslow
Miss Polly Atwood
Miss Han^h Soley.

Miss Attwood as well as Miss Winslow are of this family. And Miss N. Glover did me honor by her presence, for she is older than cousin Sally and of her acquaintance. We made four couple at country dancing; dancing I mean. In the evening young Mr. Waters hearing of my assembly, put his flute in his pocket and played several minuets and other tunes to which we danced mighty cleverly. But Lucinda was our principal piper. Miss Church and Miss Chaloner would have been here if sickness,—and the Miss Sheafs, if the death of their father had not prevented. The black Hatt I gratefully receive as your present but if Captain Jarvise had arrived here with it about the time he sail'd from this place for Cumberland, it would have been of more service to me, for I was obliged to borrow. * * * I hope aunt wont let me wear the black hatt with the red Dominie—for the people will ask me what I have got to sell as I go along the street if I do, or, how the folk at New guinie do? Dear mamma, you don't know the fation here—I beg to look like other folk * * I must now close up this Journal.

With Duty, Love & Compliments, as due, perticularly to my

A THANKSGIVING WITH ANNA GREEN WINSLOW 61

Dear little brother (I long to see him) & Mrs Law, I will write her soon,

I am Hon'd Papa & Mama,

Y^r ever Dutiful Daughter,

Anne Green Winslow.

N. B. My aunt Deming dont approve of my English & has not the fear that you will think her concerned in the Diction.

A New England Thanksgiving Dinner in 1779

“Dear Cousin Betsey:— * *

When Thanksgiving Day was approaching our dear Grandmother Smith (nee Jerusha Mather, great-granddaughter of the Rev. Richard Mather of Dorchester, Mass.,) who is sometimes a little desponding of Spirit as you well know, did her best to persuade us that it would be better to make it a Day of Fasting and Prayer in view of the Wickedness of our Friends &c. the Vileness of our Enemies. I am sure you can hear Grandmother say that and see her shake her cap border. But indeed there was some occasion for her remarks, for our resistance to an unjust authority has cost our beautiful Coast Towns very dear the last year & all of us have had much to suffer. But my dear Father brought her to a more proper frame of Mind, so that by the time the Day came she was ready to enjoy it almost as well as Grandmother Worthington did, & she, you will remember, always sees the bright side. In the mean while we had all of us been working hard to get all things in readiness to do honor to the Day.

“This year it was Uncle Simeon’s turn to have the dinner at his house, but of course we all helped them as they help us when it is our turn, & there is always enough for us all to do. All the baking of pies & cakes was done at our house & we had the big oven heated & filled twice each day for three days before it was all done, & everything was Good, though we did have to do without some things that ought to be used. Neither Love nor Money could buy Raisins,



but our good red cherries dried without the pits, did almost as well & happily Uncle Simeon still had some spices in store. The tables were set in the Dining Hall and even that big room had no space to spare when we were all seated. The Servants had enough ado to get around the Tables & serve us all without over-setting things. There were our two Grandmothers side by side. They are always handsome old Ladies, but now, many thought, they were handsomer than ever, & happy they were to look around upon so many of their descendants. Uncle & Aunt Simeon preside at one Table, & Father & Mother at the other. Besides us five boys & girls there were two of the Gales & three Elmers, besides James Browne & Ephriam Cowles. We had them at our table because they could be best supervised there. Most of the students had gone to their own homes for the weeks, but Mr. Skiff and Mr. — were too far away from their homes. They sat at Uncle Simeon's table & so did Uncle Paul and his family, five of them in all, & Cousins Phin & Poll. Then there were six of the Livingston family next door. They had never seen a Thanksgiving Dinner before, having been used to keep Christmas Day instead, as is the wont in New York & Province. Then there were four Old Ladies who have no longer Homes or Children of their own & so came to us. They were invited by my Mother, but Uncle and Aunt Simeon wished it so.

“Of course we could have no Roast Beef. None of us have tasted Beef this three years back as it all must go to the Army, & too little they get, poor fellows. But, Mayquittymaw's Hunters were able to get us a fine red Deer, so that we had a good haunch of Venisson on each Table. These were balanced by huge Chines of Roast Pork at the other ends of the Tables. Then there was on one a big Roast Turkey & on the other a Goose, & two big Pigeon Pasties. Then there was an abundance of good Vegetables of all

the old Sorts & one which I do not believe you have yet seen. Uncle Simeon had imported the Seede from England just before the War began & only this Year was there enough for Table use. It is called Sellery & you eat it without cooking. It is very good served with meats. Next year Uncle Simeon says he will be able to raise enough to give us all some. It has to be taken up, roots & all & buried in earth in the cellar through the winter & only pulling up some when you want it to use.

"Our Mince Pies were good although we had to use dried Cherries as I told you, & the meat was shoulder of Venisson, instead of Beef. The Pumpkin Pies, Apple Tarts & big Indian Puddings lacked for nothing save Appetite by the time we had got around to them.

"Of course we had no Wine. Uncle Simeon has still a cask or two, but it must be all saved for the sick, & indeed, for those who are well, good Cider is a sufficient Substitute. There was no Plumb Pudding, but a boiled Suet Pudding, stirred thick with dried Plumbs & Cherries, was called by the old name & answered the purpose. All the other spice had been used in the Mince Pies, so for this Pudding we used a jar of West India preserved Ginger which chanced to be left of the last shipment which Uncle Simeon had from there, we chopped the Ginger small and stirred it through with the Plumbs and Cherries. It was extraordinary goods. The Day was bitter cold & when we got home from Meeting, which Father did not keep over long by reason of the cold, we were glad eno' of the fire in Uncle's Dining Hall, but by the time the dinner was one-half over those of us who were on the fire side of one Table was forced to get up & carry our plates with us around to the far side of the other Table, while those who had sat there were glad to bring their plates around to the fire side to get warm. All but the Old Ladies who had a screen put behind their chairs.

"Uncle Símoen was in his best mood, and you know how good that is! He kept both Tables in a roar of laughter with his droll stories of the days when he was studying medicine in Edinborough, & afterwards he & Father & Uncle Paul joined in singing Hymns & Ballads. You know how fine their voices go together. Then we all sang a Hymn and afterwards my dear Father led us in prayer, remembering all Absent Friends before the Throne of Grace, & much I wished that my dear Betsey was here as one of us, as she has been of yore.

"We did not rise from the Table until it was quite dark, & when the dishes had been cleared away we all got around the fire as close as we could, & cracked nuts, & sang songs, & told stories. At least some told, & others listened. You know nobody can exceed the two Grandmothers at telling tales of all the things they have seen themselves, & repeating those of the early years in New England, & even some in the Old England, which they had heard in their youth from their Elders. My Father says it is a goodly custom to hand down all worthy deeds & traditions from Father to Son, as the Israelites were commanded to do about the Passover & as the Indians here have always done, because the Word that is spoken is remembered longer than the one that is written. * * Brother Jack, who did not reach here until late on Wednesday though he left the College very early on Monday Morning & rode with all due diligence considering the snow, brought an orange to each of the Grandmothers, but Alas! they were frozen in his saddle bags. We soaked the frost out in cold water, but I guess they wasn't as good as they should have been * *

Juliana Smith.

Thanksgiving Proclamation of Gen. Washington at Valley Forge, May 6, 1778

"It having pleased the Almighty Ruler of the Universe to defend the cause of the United American States, and finally to raise us up a powerful friend among the princes of the earth, to establish our liberty and independency upon a lasting foundation, it becomes us to set apart a day for gratefully acknowledging the Divine Goodness, and celebrating the important event which we owe to his Divine Interposition. The several brigades are to be assembled for this purpose at nine o'clock to-morrow morning, when their chaplains will communicate the intelligence contained in the postscript of the Pennsylvania Gazette of the second instant, and offer up thanksgiving, and deliver a discourse suitable to the occasion.

"At half-past ten o'clock a cannon will be fired, which is to be a signal for the men to be under arms; the brigade inspectors will then inspect their dress and arms, and form the battalions according to the instructions given them, and announce to the commanding officers of the brigade that the battalions are formed.

"The commanders of brigades will then appoint field-officers to the battalions, after which each battalion will be ordered to hold and ground their arms. At half-past eleven a second cannon will be fired as a signal for the march, upon which the several brigades will begin march by wheeling to the right of platoons, and proceed by the nearest way to the left of their ground by the new position; this will be pointed out by the brigade inspectors.

"A third signal will then be given, on which there will be a

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discharge of thirteen cannon, after which a running fire of the infantry will begin on the right of Woodford's, and will continue throughout the front line; it will then be taken up on the left of the second line, and continue to the right. Upon a signal given, the whole army will huzza:

"LONG LIVE THE KING OF FRANCE!"

"The Artillery then begins, and fires thirteen rounds; this will be succeeded by a second general discharge of the musketry in a running fire, and huzza:

"LONG LIVE THE FRIENDLY EUROPEAN POWERS!"

"The last discharge of thirteen pieces of artillery will be given, followed by a general running fire and huzza:

"THE AMERICAN STATES!"

Geo. Washington.

Thanksgiving in New York

Thursday Nov. 26th—Being the day appointed for a Thanksgiving, I went to St. Paul's Chapel, though it was most inclement and stormy—but few people at church.

Washington's Diary.

Record of a Thanksgiving at Scituate Church Dec. 22, 1636

“In ye Meetinghouse, beginning some halfe an hour before nine & continued until after twelve aclock, ye day beeing very cold, beginning wt a short prayer, then a psalme sang, then more large in prayer, after that an other Psalme, & then the Word taught, after that prayer—& then a psalme,—Then makeing merry to the creatures, the poorer sort beeing invited of the richer”.

The Thanksgiving Law

“That it be in the power of the Governor & Assist^s to comãd solemn daies of humíliacon by fasting &c, and also for thankesgiving as occasion shall be offered”.

Colonial Laws, 1636.

**The First Thanksgiving Proclamation in Early New York
Records, Aug. 31, 1645**

“Whereas it hath pleased Almighty God in his unbounded clemency and mercy, in addition to many previous blessings, to suffer us to reach a long wished for peace with the Indians. Therefore, it is deemed necessary to proclaim the fact to all those of New Netherland, to the end that in all places within the aforesaid country where Dutch and English churches are established, God Almighty may be especially thanked, praised, and blessed on next Wednesday forenoon, being the 6th of September, the text to be appropriate and the sermon to be applicable thereto. Your Reverence will please announce this matter to the Congregation next Sunday so that they may have notice. On which we rely.

M S. Council Minutes.

Thanksgiving in Boston in 1685 and 1688

Sabbath Day, Nov^r 15, 1685. In the afternoon Mary Smith, Widow, Mr. Wheelwright's Grandchild, was taken into the Church; then Mr. Willard mentioned what the Elders had done as to a Thanksgiving, and propounded to the Church that we might have one on the first Thorsday in December: because had Fasted, and God had graciously answered our Prayers; so should meet Him in the same place to give Thanks for that, and any other Providence that hath passed before us. Silence gave Consent, no one speaking.

Wednesday, Nov^r 18. Uncomfortable Court day by reason of extream sharp words between the Deputy Governour and Mr. Stoughton, Dudley and Others. Some Essay to have put a Sanction upon the Apointment for a Thanksgiving; but it fell through. I argued 'twas not fit upon meer Generals, as (the Mercies of the year) to Comand a Thanksgiving and of Particulars we could not agree. Governour would have had one Article for the Peace of England, according to His Majesty's Proclamation.

Friday Nov^r 20th * * Mr. Stoughton & Dudley not here today. "Twas Essayed again to have had a Sanction put on the Thanksgiving: but 'twas again pleaded, to do it without mentioning particular causes would be to impose too much on those Comanded. So fell.

Samuel Sewall.

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April 18, 1688—** This day an Order is made that next Sabbath-day senight be a Thanksgiving for the Queen's being with Child.

Apr. 22, 1688—Mr. Willard having rec'd no Order mentions not the Thanksgiving: though it seems one was sent to him at noon to mention it, but left no Order with him.

April 29—Mr. Willard received an Order about the Thanksgiving on Satterday night; yet read it not this day, but after the Notes said such an Occasion was by the Governour recommended to be given Thanks for.

Samuel Sewall.







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